

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there should be a uniform pattern of education in the country and lessons on secularism, patriotism and social justice should be included in the course of study. Today, alongwith patriotism, secularism is also important. But we cannot expect our children to become secular on growing up if we teach them that people belonging to a particular religion are foreigners or such and such people are foreigners. Does the Government propose to delete such portions from the books which are non-secular and also issue necessary guidelines to States in this regard as some initial steps had been taken during our Government so as to ensure that education, which is non-secular and gives impetus to communal forces, is not imparted to children.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: I fully agree with the views of the hon. Member. I cannot say that I can order deletion of all such portions from each and every textbook, but I do feel that such text-books should be produced which highlight our cultural integrity and diversity and shun disintegration and confrontation.

PROPOSAL TO INCREASE NAVODAYA VIDYALAYAS

*26. **SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV:** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the number of Navodaya Vidyalayas; and

(b) if so, the extent of such increase, envisaged, State-wise?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Scheme of Navodaya Vidyalaya envisages establishment of a Navodaya Vidyalaya in each district.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have asked a very simple question from the hon. Minister of Human Resource Development; whether government proposes to increase the number of envisaged, Navodaya Vidyalayas and

if so, extent of such increase, statewise. But this has not been replied. As has just been said by Shri Rabi Ray the object behind opening Navodaya Vidyalaya, as per the recommendations of Kothari Commission, was to provide maximum facilities of education to the people of rural areas. I would like to know from the hon. Minister the time by which Navodaya Vidyalayas will be set up in each and every district in the country?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to restrict myself to the scope of the question only. In fact, had the process continued uninterrupted, we might have reached nearer to the target of establishing Navodaya Vidyalayas in each and every district of the country. It is a different issue and is not linked with the original question. I cannot give any definite date, but it will be our sincere effort. So far 275 schools have been opened in the country. It will be the endeavour of the Government, to achieve the target by opening Navodaya Vidyalayas in all the 750 districts of the country.

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Bihar is the most backward State in the country and the Saharsa Commissioner has been declared industrially and educationally backward by the Central Government. Despite its being a division, no Navodaya Vidyalaya has been opened there. I would like to know whether the Government proposes to set up a Navodaya Vidyalaya in Saharsa during the current financial year.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as per the information available with me, Navodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in 25 out of the 39 districts in Bihar. As regards the question of the hon. Member, as to why a Navodaya Vidyalaya could not be set up there. I can furnish the details after collecting the required information.

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: I am giving the information.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: I am not contradicting the information provided by the hon. Member, but let me also ascertain the views of the Government of Bihar in the matter.

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV : Will the school be set up there after the completion of enquiry.?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Yes, why not.

[English]

SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI : I would like to know whether it has come to the notice of the Government that admissions to Navodaya Schools are very much restricted to boys or girls coming from rural areas, which would cause lot of inconvenience to the children coming from small towns and municipalities with a population of below 25,000. If so, will the Government think of revising the policy and see that children who are studying in the small cities and municipalities with a population below 25,000 will also get admission in the Navodaya Schools?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Basically, the schools are being opened in the rural areas and I would not like to say something which may interfere with the total concept. The Member has made a suggestion. I will see what can be done in the matter.

SHRI RAM NAIK: The last Janata Dal Government had informed this House that they would not open new Navodaya Vidyalayas until the functioning of the Vidyalayas which have been already established is assessed fully. Has this Government decided to change the policy?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: The policy to open Navodaya Vidyalayas is very much part of the 1986 policy. We have reiterated that this would continue. That would continue and that would not be disturbed. So far as improvement in the system is concerned, hon. Members are most welcome to make any suggestions and I will try to see that they are acted upon within framework of the policy already accepted.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated that 275 schools have been opened.

But the condition of schools is very deplorable. Some schools do not have their own building and in some schools there are no teachers. I would like to request the hon. Minister to examine the functioning of these schools and take steps to improve the condition of the schools already functioning. Will the hon. Minister please look into the matter?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there can be no two opinions in this regard and it will definitely be done.

DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEYA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to point out to the hon. Minister that in view of the standard of education imparted in Navodaya Vidyalayas, more and more people, especially the people of rural areas, where the standard of education in the schools is not up to the mark, are interested in admitting their children in these schools. In view of the above, I would like to know whether the Government proposes to increase the number of Navodaya Vidyalayas and also to increase the strength of students in the schools, already functioning.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will definitely see what could be done within the present financial constraints.

SHRI TEJSINGHRAO BHONSLE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are 30 districts in Maharashtra. I would like to know whether Navodaya Vidyalayas have been opened in all the districts.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: As per information available with me, these schools have been opened only in 19 districts of the State.

ECOLOGICAL TASK FORCE IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

*27. **PROF. PREM DHUMAL :** Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal or request from the State Government of Himachal Pradesh for setting up an Ecological Task Force comprising of Ex-servicemen; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?